

<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Equality and Diversity Policy (Formerly Single Equality Scheme)</b>
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## Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

### Aim / Scope:

Sets out Northumberland College's commitment to Equality and Diversity, what the college aspires to in relation to Equality and Diversity and what the responsibilities of staff and students are in relation to Equality and Diversity.

### Policy Owner:

Executive Team

Author / Lead	Equality and Diversity Manager
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## **Northumberland College**

### **Equality and Diversity Policy**

#### **1. Equality and Diversity Policy Statement**

Northumberland College is committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive working and learning environment that respects and celebrates difference. We aim to provide a community where everyone feels able to participate fully in College life and achieve their full potential.

The College's commitment to Equality and Diversity is endorsed and led by the College executive team and governors. Our goal is to ensure that this commitment translates into action across the whole College community and that equality and fairness become embedded into our everyday activities. In order to achieve this ambition, we need all staff, students, partners, visitors, contractors and sub-contractors working on behalf of the College to share our commitment.

#### **2. Who does the policy apply to?**

This policy applies to all members of the College community including staff, students and visitors. The policy is also binding on our external contractors, employers and other partners who the College collaborates with. The policy applies to all sites and premises belonging to Northumberland College or used by Northumberland College for carrying out its functions.

#### **3. Legal requirements**

The Equality Act 2010

The Act brings together, for the first time, the legal requirements on equality that the private, public and voluntary sectors are required to follow. It effects equality law at work and in the delivery of its services. It replaces existing equality laws including:

- ✓ The Equal Pay Act 1970
- ✓ The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- ✓ The Race Relations Act 1976
- ✓ The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The Act requires that people be treated fairly at work or when accessing services provided. It protects people from discrimination on the basis of certain characteristics. These are known as "protected characteristics". There are slight variations to the characteristics whether a person is at work or accessing a service. However, every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, therefore, the Act protects everyone against unfair treatment. There are nine protected characteristics that provide protection from discrimination for employees, these are:

- ✓ Age
- ✓ Disability
- ✓ Gender
- ✓ Sexual Orientation

- ✓ Race
- ✓ Gender reassignment
- ✓ Marriage of civil partnerships
- ✓ Religion or belief (including non-belief)
- ✓ Pregnancy and maternity

There are eight protected characteristics for people accessing services, these are:

- ✓ Age
- ✓ Disability
- ✓ Sex
- ✓ Gender reassignment
- ✓ Race
- ✓ Religion or belief (including non-belief)
- ✓ Pregnancy and maternity

The Act sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

The Act prohibits unfair treatment in the workplace, when providing goods, facilities and services, when exercising public functions, in the disposal and management of premises in education and by associations.

The main forms of prohibited conduct are:

### **Discrimination**

Treating a person worse than someone else because of a protected characteristic (direct discrimination).

Putting in place a rule or way of doing things that has a worse impact on someone with a protected characteristic than someone without one, when this cannot be justified (indirect discrimination).

Treating a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected to their disability when this cannot be justified.

Failing to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people.

### **Harassment**

Unwanted contact which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or which is hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive to someone with a protected characteristic or in a way that is sexual in nature.

### **Victimisation**

Treating someone unfairly because they have taken (or might be taking) action under the Equality Act or supporting someone who is doing so.

The law also protects people from discrimination:

By someone who wrongly perceives them to have one or more of the protected characteristics.

Because they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic. This includes the parent of a disabled child or adult or someone who is caring for a disabled person.

#### **4. Key Principles**

The College expects all members of the College community to treat each other with dignity and respect. We support the right of individuals and groups to hold their own beliefs and values, but will not tolerate these being manifested in a way that intimidates, humiliates or creates a hostile or degrading learning or working environment.

The College is striving to create an inclusive learning and working environment that supports good relations between people and challenges prejudice, intolerance and discrimination in all its forms.

The College will ensure that all of our students, staff and visitors, as well as those who apply or seek to apply to work or study with us, are treated fairly and are not discriminated against on any grounds, including those protected by the Equality Act 2010.

To support our commitment to Equality and Diversity, and to meet our legal duties, the College will publish an equality information report each year and set equality objectives every four years. The equality objectives and Equality and Diversity action plan will be monitored by the Equality and Diversity Committee on a termly basis.

The College will communicate its commitment to promoting Equality and Diversity in staff and student recruitment material, handbooks, policies, social media and in other corporate communications.

The College will ensure that publicity material positively promotes the diversity of the College community.

The College will actively engage with staff, students, the students' association, trade unions and partners on key matters related to Equality and Diversity.

The College will support a range of activities and campaigns each year to celebrate key national equality events and faith and religious festivals.

The College will carry out Equality Analysis to assess the implications of policies and decisions on the College community and to help prevent and tackle inequality.

The College will annually carry out an analysis of under-representation and differences in outcomes for staff and students are identified.

Every opportunity will be given for students and staff to disclose any disabilities or other needs relating to 'protected characteristics' that they may have. The College will promote a culture of inclusivity, in which individuals feel confident and safe to make a disclosure. The College will provide reasonable adjustments in response to individual need and will not disadvantage a student or member of staff on the basis of such needs.

Where data relevant to Equality and Diversity, or any of the protected characteristics is gathered and stored by the College, it will be done so appropriately and in line with data protection guidelines.

The College will ensure that there are effective and sensitive support and complaints mechanisms in place, should anyone feel that they have either witnessed or experienced discrimination.

## **5. Learning, teaching and assessment**

The College is committed to promoting Equality and Diversity through effective teaching, learning and assessment.

Equality and diversity will be fully integrated into the learning experience, and will be evident in curriculum planning, developing schemes of work and delivering teaching, learning and assessment.

Academy Heads, Directors of Curriculum, Course Team Leaders , Tutors and Mentors will monitor student performance by protected characteristic and set actions to narrow any achievement gaps between different groups of students.

The curriculum offered will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is culturally sensitive and reflects the interests and backgrounds of the students.

All lecturers will use resources and activities that are free from discriminatory or stereotypical assumptions or images.

All classroom and work based students will receive information on Equality and Diversity as part of their induction programme. This will familiarise them with this policy as well as endorse our approach to dignity, respect and Great British Values. It will also ensure that they understand their rights and responsibilities to others whilst studying at the College and on work placements.

A robust tutorial programme will include a variety of Equality and Diversity topics to raise awareness, celebrate diversity and promote equality. This is further supported with campus based enrichment themed events to increase understanding of diversity and encourage community cohesion. The Northumberland College Entrepreneurial Fund (NCEF) encourages understanding of Equality and Diversity.

Work based students will be empowered and supported to challenge practices and behaviours in the workplace, which they feel contravene College policy in relation to Equality and Diversity.

## **6. Employment**

The College aims to employ a workforce that reflects, at every level, the community which it serves.

In seeking to achieve a balanced workforce at all levels, the College will ensure that no employee, job applicant or candidate for promotion will be disadvantaged or treated less favourably because of conditions or requirements that are not related to the job.

All staff will treat each other in a fair and respectful manner that is free from discrimination.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to working arrangements and premises to ensure equal access for employees or potential employees who have a disability or a particular health concern.

All staff will receive timely and relevant Equality and Diversity training. The College supports a blended learning approach; training will be delivered through a mixture of induction, face-to-face and online sessions.

The College will regularly monitor the workforce profile and take positive action to tackle any under-representation of particular groups within the workforce at all levels that reflects, the community which it serves.

The Human Resources Department will be responsible for the maintenance and reporting of equality data relating to the workforce. The Equality and Diversity Committee will review and monitor this data on a termly basis to identify any trends or differences between the protected groups and agree actions.

## **7. Student Support and Student Voice**

All students will be encouraged to take part in Student Voice activities. These will be monitored to ensure that they are inclusive. We will also ensure that students on the Student Association represent the various equality groups.

Positive action will be taken to ensure that particular groups of students who are found to be more vulnerable to leaving their course early e.g. young parents, Looked After Children, Care Leavers, Self-supporting young people, High level needs and those suffering with poor mental health and /or health related conditions will be offered additional support.

Support services enable students to gain access to the curriculum, to stay on programme and to achieve to the best of their ability. Students come to the College with a range of different educational needs. We will try our best to meet those needs through comprehensive initial



assessments prior to courses beginning and additional support for students with a disability or learning difficulty. The College employs a team of Mentors to provide additional support with health and well-being.

Residential students are fully supported by the Residential manager and Student Wardens.

## **8. Admissions**

All entrance requirements for College courses will relate to standards laid down by the appropriate validating body or to objective criteria relating to course content and outcomes.

All potential students who meet the entrance criteria will have equal access to College curriculum. Where places are limited, the College will not discriminate against any of the protected characteristics. The College will not discriminate in providing access to opportunities and facilities related to their curriculum offer.

All students will have equal access to general College facilities and to appropriate social or enrichment activities offered by the College.

Under-represented groups will be encouraged to participate in all College courses, enrichment and activities.

## **9. Marketing and Recruitment**

The College will consult with the communities it serves to ensure the curriculum offer reflects its diverse needs.

An Equality and Diversity statement will appear in all college literature.

College publicity will reflect the cultural diversity of the College community and will avoid all types of negative stereotyping.

The College will ensure its publicity reaches all sections of the communities it serves.

Information about special facilities and resources for supported learning will be included in all prospectuses and publicity material.

Resources will be available in other formats, including Braille, audio and large print.

## **10. Student Support**

All students will be offered access to the support network available in College.

All students will have access to course guidance, personal counselling, career guidance and the availability of student support funds.

Specialist equipment and software will be made available for students with learning difficulties and disabilities where required to reach their full learning potential.

### **11. Environment and Facilities**

The College will endeavour to create a safe, welcoming environment which enables every student to feel comfortable and reach their full learning potential.

The College will provide appropriate accessible learning resources for all students.

All students will have access to enrichment activities and the Passport to Employment.

### **12. External Partners**

External partners and associated employers working with the College, apprentices and students must comply with the Equality and Diversity Policy and have appropriate policies and procedures in place regarding Equality and Diversity.

When drawing up contracts and service specifications, the College must ensure that external partners are made aware of their legal duties in relation to equality and are specifically required to comply with all equality legislation when delivering services on behalf of the College.

### **13. Visitors, Contractors and Sub-contractors**

Visitors, contractors and sub-contractors must comply with the College's Equality and Diversity Policy.

College staff meeting visitors or employing contractors and subcontractors are responsible for making them aware of the College's Equality and Diversity Policy.

### **14. Responsibilities**

A successful Equality and Diversity policy requires the active support of the entire College community. Whilst there is a collective responsibility to ensure this policy is successfully implemented, there are also specific responsibilities as set out below:

The Board has ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy, the Equality Objectives and the Equality and Diversity Action Plan. The practical application of the policy rests with senior leaders, including the Principal, the Executive team and members of the senior management team.

The Vice Principal for Employer, Enterprise and Commercial Services, Directors of Student Services, the Director of Learning 10 and the Director of Quality are responsible for ensuring that learner-

related issues are effectively addressed. The Director of Human Resources is responsible for ensuring that staff related issues are effectively addressed.

The nominated Equality and Diversity Manager (The Vice Principal for Employer, Enterprise and Commercial Service) has specific responsibilities for supporting and advising on the implementation of this policy and the equality objectives.

Senior and Operational Managers in all support areas are accountable for delivering the equality commitments in their designated areas of responsibility.

All staff, students and others to whom this policy applies are responsible for ensuring that they read and understand this policy and seek clarification where required. Staff and students will be reminded of their responsibilities through the appropriate College communication channels.

All staff and students, those carrying out work or delivering services on behalf of the College and our partners, are required to adhere to this policy and everyone is expected to support the College in promoting equality and challenging discrimination and harassment.

## **15. Implementation**

The College will ensure that:

This policy is communicated to employees, applicants for employment, contractors and others working for the College, students and those applying to study at the College.

Staff and students are provided with appropriate Equality and Diversity training and guidance, including training on induction courses.

Specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the Equality and Diversity policy are incorporated into job descriptions and work objectives of staff.

Communications materials reflect the diverse College community and help to promote equality and inclusion.

Prompt action is taken to address any allegations of discrimination, victimisation or harassment.

External contractors, subcontractors and agencies are made aware of their responsibilities in relation to Equality and Diversity and commitment is obtained from them to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation and College policies and procedures.

## **16. Monitoring and review**

The Equality and Diversity Committee will:

Monitor equality data in relation to staff and students on a termly basis and agree actions to address any identified inequalities.

Publish an annual report on the progress of the equality objectives and actions. This will also include an analysis of headline workforce and student data.

Review the equality objectives annually and set new objectives every four years.

Prepare and deliver an annual Equality and Diversity action plan to help the College meet its equality objectives.

Support staff and student voice initiatives and obtain feedback from the Students' Association, Trade Unions, staff and student equality forums and other engagement mechanisms.

Review and amend the Equality and Diversity policy to reflect developments in equality legislation and best practice.

Regularly report to Governors and the College leadership team on Equality and Diversity issues.

## **17. Complaints**

Members of staff who believe they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure. A copy of the grievance procedure is available through the staff policy portal or in hard copy on request from the Human Resources Department.

Students who believe they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the complaints procedure. A copy of this procedure is available through the Help Hubs or in hard copy on request from the Quality team.

Every effort will be made to ensure that any person making a complaint will not be victimised. All complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation will be dealt with promptly and confidentially.

The College takes all allegations of discrimination, harassment or victimisation very seriously. If on investigation, it is established that discrimination, victimisation or harassment has occurred, disciplinary action will be taken and may result in dismissal or expulsion.

### **The following policies and procedures should be used in conjunction with this document:**

- ✓ Bullying and Harassment Policy
- ✓ Safeguarding Policy (Incorporating Prevent)
- ✓ Disability Statement
- ✓ Student Discipline procedure
- ✓ Staff Grievance Procedures
- ✓ Staff Discipline
- ✓ Competence and Capability Policy
- ✓ Equality Objectives 2016 – 2019
- ✓ Equality and Diversity Action Plan
- ✓ College Equality Information

- ✓ Equality Impact Assessment Part One
- ✓ Equality Impact Assessment Part Two
- ✓ Incident Report Form
- ✓ Annual Report for Governors
- ✓ Recording, Reporting and Responding to Incidents

## **18. Equality Impact Assessments**

EIA provide a systematic way to ensure legal obligations are met and are also a practical way of examining new and existing policies and practices, to determine what effect they may have on equality for those affected by the outcomes.

By ensuring that equality is embedded within their objectives from the outset, equality impact assessments will assist organisations in achieving their business objectives. EIAs enable organisations to identify problems and make the necessary changes.

EIA is the method of examining the main functions and policies of an organisation to see whether they have potential to affect people differently. Their purpose is to identify and address real or potential inequalities resulting from policy and practice development. EIA should cover all strands of diversity and ensure that all receive equitable attention.

EIA will help to gain an understanding of the College and the way decisions are made by:

- ✓ Considering the current situation.
- ✓ Deciding what is to be achieved – i.e. the objectives and intended outcomes of a function or policy.
- ✓ Considering what evidence there is to support the decision.
- ✓ Where the gaps are in terms of evidence to support the decision.
- ✓ Making an informed decision.
- ✓ Reporting/publishing the decision.

There are two parts to EIA. Part One, the screening process, where the policy author will carry out an assessment of any impact their policy may have on any of the protected characteristics. It is at this stage that a decision will be made to either:

- ✓ Amend the policy if possible.
- ✓ Temporarily suspend the policy to enable further clarification or information.
- ✓ Proceed to Part Two – full impact process.

The College will seek to involve an appropriate variety of people in the process of conducting EIA.

## **19. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Governors are responsible for ensuring that:**

- The College is compliant with the equality legislation and the codes of practice supporting it.
- The Board proactively considers Equality and Diversity as part of their decision-making process.
- The Equality and Diversity Policy, Equality Objectives and Equality and Diversity Action Plan are implemented effectively.
- The membership of the Corporation reflects the diversity of the communities served by the College.
- Equality and diversity is fully integrated into the Colleges' strategic and business plans.
- The Board receives termly Equality and Diversity updates that monitor progress on the Equality Objectives and Equality and Diversity Action Plan.

### **The Equality and Diversity Committee is responsible for:**

- Overseeing the continuing application and development of the Equality and Diversity Policy in line with legislation and the Colleges' strategic objectives.
- Preparing, monitoring and reviewing the Equality Objectives and Equality and Diversity Action Plan.
- Reporting progress on equality issues to the Governors on a termly basis.
- Advising on the formulation of policies, procedures and resources.
- Advising the College on changes to legislation and disseminating good practice and updating training materials and website information.

### **The Principal and Executive Team are responsible for:**

- Providing leadership and acting as champions to promote Equality and Diversity across the College community.
- Communicating the policy, internally and externally.
- Working with Governors and Senior Managers to ensure that the Equality and Diversity Policy, Equality Objectives and Equality and Diversity Action Plan are implemented effectively.
- Ensuring that appropriate action is taken against individuals working on behalf of the college who do not act in accordance with the policy.

### **Managers are responsible for:**

- Ensuring that staff have a clear vision and shared understanding of what the College is aiming to achieve through the policy.
- Implementing the policy as part of their day-to day management of staff and in applying employment policies and practices in a fair and equitable way.
- Ensuring Equality and Diversity issues are addressed in performance reviews.
- Ensuring all staff act in accordance with the Equality and Diversity policy providing support and direction where necessary.

- Effectively managing and dealing promptly when investigating issues relating to potential discrimination, bullying or harassment.
- Ensuring that all decisions that will change provisions, practices or policies and affect the workforce or students are subject to an Equality Analysis. For further information refer to the Equality Analysis toolkit.
- Taking the lead in creating a positive, inclusive ethos that challenges inappropriate language and behaviour and celebrates diversity.

**Academy Heads, Directors of Curriculum, Course leaders and Tutors are also responsible for ensuring that:**

- Equality and diversity is promoted in all student settings and embedded into curriculum areas.
- Student performance is monitored by protected characteristic on a termly basis and actions set to address any identified gaps.
- Student performance by protected characteristic is recorded in the Self Assessment Reviews (SARs) and actions are set to narrow any performance gaps for protected groups.
- Student induction programmes and tutorials develop student understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion.

**All staff are responsible for ensuring that they:**

- Have read and understood the policy.
- Implement the policy in their day-to-day work and model behaviour that reflects the spirit of the policy;
- Treat people with respect and dignity in all their interactions;
- Notify their line manager of any concerns with regard to the conduct of other employees, students, visitors or third parties.
- Help to build an inclusive culture where diversity is valued and people feel confident to bring their whole selves into the working and learning environment.
- Challenge inappropriate and discriminatory language and behaviour by staff, students, placement providers and other users of our services.

**Human Resources are responsible for:**

- Developing employment policy and strategy on Equality and Diversity.
- Providing guidance to line managers and staff.
- Supporting managers in investigating issues relating to potential discrimination.
- Monitoring and reporting on the workforce equality data to the Equality and Diversity Committee.
- Championing Equality and Diversity issues, internally and externally.
- Facilitating training and development initiatives in relation to Equality and Diversity.

**All students are responsible for ensuring that they:**

- Adhere to the Student Code of Conduct and treat all members of the College community with dignity and respect.
- Create and maintain a learning and social environment where there is zero tolerance for bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Support and promote the Equality and Diversity policy and procedures.
- Understand the consequences of contravening equality legislation and the Equality and Diversity policy.

### **Partners, Contractors and Service Providers**

- All partners, contractors and service providers will be responsible for adhering to any equality guidelines in agreements or contracts.
- The College is committed to ensuring that those organisations with which it works and employs will demonstrate their commitment to Equality and Diversity and have policies and procedures in place to achieve this.

## **20. Transgender Policy Statement**

Gender Identity issues are becoming increasingly recognised by colleges due to research, legislation and our commitment to equality and diversity.

### **Transgender Identity**

A Transgender person feels that their external appearance (sex) does not match up with the way they feel internally about their gender identity. A Female to Male (F2M) person will have the external appearance or body of a female and identify their gender as male; a Male to Female (M2F) person will have the external appearance or body of a male and identify their gender as female.

Gender Dysphoria (or Gender Identity Disorder) is a clinical condition that can present from as early as age 2 and can only be diagnosed by a medical and/or psychiatric expert. A person diagnosed with Gender Dysphoria may require treatment (e.g. hormone blockers) to ameliorate the symptoms associated with being Transgender. A Transgender person may live their life without being or needing to be diagnosed as having Gender Dysphoria.

It must be understood that some people with Gender Dysphoria may not want any treatment. Some may choose to be known by a different name or to wear different clothes. However, most or all young Trans people (and their families) will need some expert support as they grow up and develop.

### **Legislation**

Legislation that informs the participation of Trans students in colleges include the Human Rights Act 1998, Gender Recognition Act 2004 and the Equality Act 2010.

#### **The Human Rights Act 1998**

The following Articles from The Human Rights Act 1998 support the rights and needs of Trans people to live their lives in their true gender.

- Article 8: right to respect for private life and family life
- Article 10: freedom of expression
- Article 14: the prohibition of discrimination

#### **The Gender Recognition Act 2004**



The Gender Recognition Act 2004 is mainly concerned with the process by which a person can get a Gender Recognition Certificate, and correct their original birth certificate to match their true gender. This can only occur after a person reaches 18 years of age but is something that many younger people may aspire to.

### **The Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 ensures legal protection against discrimination (direct or indirect) for everyone under the nine protected characteristics defined in the Act, one of which is Gender Reassignment (also known as Transgender).

Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010 makes it clear that the Act specifically refers to young people.

The Equality Act 2010 (2:1:7) states that;

A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

The act applies to employment, education and a range of other areas where discrimination may take place. In order to be protected under the Act, a student will not necessarily have to be undergoing a medical procedure to change their sex, but they must be taking steps to live in the opposite gender, or be proposing to do so.

### **Discrimination**

The Equality Act 2010 ensures legal protection against discrimination in employment, education, the provision of services and the delivery of public functions, in relation to the nine protected characteristics defined in the Act, one of which is Gender Reassignment.

The legislation states that a college must not discriminate against a student because of their transgender status. Discrimination can be direct or indirect. Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice applies to everyone but puts a person with a particular protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage, and it can't be justified as a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim.

Unlike most of the protected characteristics, such as sex, race and religion, but like disability, this protection works in one direction only – not being transgendered is not a protected characteristic. Colleges are therefore free to take special steps to meet the needs of Trans students without being accused of discriminating against students who are not Trans. There is no legal requirement, as there is for disability, to make “reasonable adjustments” for Trans students, but colleges may take a similar approach to ensure that Trans students are properly catered for, and some of the possible steps discussed in this document are described as “reasonable adjustments”.

### **The Student Experience**

It is essential that we review every stage of the student journey to ensure the experience is a positive and supportive one. Below is a series of checklists which may be useful as a self-assessment tool.

#### **Marketing and website:**

Is there explicit reference to the College being Trans-positive?

Is there an area within the equality section which signposts to support for Trans students and staff?

Do course materials demonstrate our commitment to equality and diversity and specifically Trans issues and support available at College.

Are there posters around college which specifically relate to Trans issues and demonstrate the college's commitment to being a Trans positive organisation?

Are all staff Trans aware with up to date refresher training for customer service / front of house staff

#### **Application process:**

Does the application process have opportunities for disclosure and requests for support?

Is there a system in place to follow up specific requests?

**Support on course:**

Are tutors and support staff aware of any potential challenges for Trans students, e.g. changing facilities, bullying, access to services, work experience fears?

**Work Experience:**

There is an obligation on the part of the college or college and its work experience placements to keep students safe. As already stated the Equality Act 2010 encompasses every environment that students will be working in, therefore all placements should be aware of their duties and responsibilities. Where a college is considering allowing a trans young person to attend a work experience placement the college must complete a suitable assessment on the potential placement to establish if there is any risk to the young Trans person taking account of the young Trans persons right to privacy as a general principle personal information on the young Trans person must not to be shared.

Colleges must be sensitive to this in their planning before any young Trans person is placed in any business or organisation. Careful discussion about the placement with the student, parents or guardians needs to occur to find the most suitable way forward to ensure the placement is successful.

**Tutorial:**

Does the tutorial programme include Trans issues within the equality module?  
Are staff confident in managing this as a discussion topic?

**Absences from College:**

Tutors must make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for treatment and support from external sources in line with the absence policy.  
Care must be taken to accurately and sensitively record the reason for the absence e.g. the student may need time off for a medical appointment which does not merit being recorded as sick.

**Terminology and Language:**

It is good practice to focus on correct terminology and the use of language in college. In addition, there may be a need to focus some education in class around sexual orientation and gender, so that young people have a clear understanding that sexual orientation (being heterosexual, bisexual, gay or lesbian) and gender (being male or female), are completely different things.

Terminology and language can be confusing around Trans issues. Different organisations and individuals sometimes prefer different terms to identify themselves and the nature of being Trans.

Often Trans people choose a different first name for their new identities and want documentation and records to reflect this, for example, the college individual record and registers.

It is extremely important, as a matter of fairness, respect and inclusion, to ensure that the correct gender, name and pronouns are used uniformly to address Trans people. Hearing people use 'him' or 'her' incorrectly can be uncomfortable or seriously detrimental for a Trans person to hear, especially when they are trying hard to confirm people's awareness of a new identity.

It can be very difficult a Trans student, and the college to get used to the change of name or gender if the student has not been known by that identity since the start of their college career. There may well be times when a mistake is made and this can be embarrassing for all parties. If there is difficulty in 'getting it right,' the use of the chosen first name will help to overcome this.

**Transphobia and bullying:**

Transphobic incidents or crimes must be recorded and dealt with in the same manner as other incidents that are motivated by prejudice or hate e.g. racist and homophobic incidents.

Trans people are often the subject of prejudice and the target of bullying because of their “difference”. This can be compounded by a lack of understanding and clear explanations; which in turn can generate confusion causing people to revert to learned negative gender stereotyping. Transphobic behaviour may be directed to the actual Trans person, a friend or supporter, or anyone that may be perceived to be Trans (whether they are Trans or not). All of these situations must be managed in line with college policies

#### **Use of Toilets and Changing Facilities in College:**

The use of toilets and changing facilities often generates the most debate around inclusion of Trans students. Concerns of Trans students are that they may find themselves in vulnerable situations such as a toilet or changing room where they could fall victim to unwanted attention, that could (if escalated), lead to sexual bullying, assault or other physical or emotional harm, but equally, that they are seen and treated as a member of their true gender.

Trans students are often told use the ‘accessible’ facilities rather than those for their true gender. It may then be appropriate to rename these facilities using terms such as ‘unisex accessible toilets’, ‘larger toilet’, ‘toilet and changing facility’ or simply ‘toilet’ to reduce the stigma of using toilets commonly identified as ‘Disabled Toilet’. This will help ensure colleges respect the dignity and privacy of Trans students, whilst ensuring their safety.

#### **Changing Names and Exam Certificates:**

Changing their name and gender identity is a pivotal point for many Trans people. If a Trans student wishes to have their preferred name recognised on college systems, this needs supporting and will feed on to letters home, bus pass information etc. Furthermore the change of name and associated gender identity should be respected and accommodated in the college. It is a real indicator that the Trans student or student is taking steps to, or proposing to move towards a gender they feel they wish to live in. It is relatively simple to change a name on a register and college for a preferred name and when sending details of young people to exam boards.

#### **College Trips, Exchanges and Overnight Stays:**

Issues may arise for Trans students but this must not mean that they cannot be included on the trip. Consideration should be given well in advance to any additional needs. The sleeping arrangements will need to be thought about before a trip is undertaken; it is possible that the student would prefer to have a separate room etc. Each individual case and trip needs to be thought of separately and in depth discussions should happen well in advance with any and all appropriate bodies.

The college should consider, just as anyone can be searched, Trans students may be searched at borders and other places. Different countries will have policies and procedures that they will follow. Contacting the relevant border control or agency in advance will ensure that any policy or risk assessment completed by the college or college is accurate for that visit or trip.

There are countries that are not as legally and culturally open as the UK. In fact some have laws that make it illegal to be part of the Transgender community. Some countries even make it an offence not to report to the authorities that someone is part of the Transgender community. Colleges should consider and investigate the laws regarding Trans communities in countries considered for college visits. The International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) have more information on their website about countries that pose a risk to Trans individuals.

In relation to passports the passport office has a confidential service for people that are Trans (0800 448 8484) and more advice can be found here:

<http://www.ukdps.co.uk/AdviceForTranssexuals.html>

## **Glossary of Terms and Definitions:**

**Affirmed Gender:** The core gender identity confirmed by a Transsexual person through the process of transition.

**Androgyne/ploygendered people:** Those who have non-binary gender identities and do not identify as male or female. Also other who define themselves as gender variant.

**Gender:** A socially constructed and negotiated concept that allocates certain behaviours, roles and dress codes onto male or female sexed bodies. These will not always be the same across history, across societies, or across classes, hence we know that gender is not an entirely biological matter, rather it is influenced through society's expectations but may or may not have a biological basis.

**3rd Gender:** Individuals who do not personally identify as either man or woman.

**Gender Dysphoria:** Gender dysphoria describes the discomfort experienced when a person's sense of being a man or a woman (their gender identity) is inconsistent with the physical appearance of the body. In its persistent form, this is known as transsexualism, and is a recognised medical condition.

The condition is also sometimes described as: gender identity disorder, gender incongruence, or transgenderism.

**Gender Identity:** The personal sense of being a man or a woman, or in some cases both or neither.

**Gender Recognition Act 2004 (GRA):** The UK Law which allows transsexual people to obtain gender recognition: the legal acknowledgement and recognition of their affirmed gender from birth, entitling the issue of a new birth certificate to recognise this fact.

**Gender Re-Assignment:** Under the Equality Act 2010 a person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. This is a personal process that may involve, but is not mandated to include, medical interventions such as counselling, psychotherapy, hormone therapy, or surgery.

**Gender reassignment surgery:** Medical term for what transsexual people often call gender confirmation surgery. It is surgery to bring the primary and secondary sex characteristics of a transsexual person's body into alignment with his or her internal selfperception, or core Gender Identity.

**Non-op:** A person who does not desire surgery, cannot undergo surgery, or does not need surgery to feel comfortable with his or her body in relation to their gender identity.

**Gender Variance or Transsexualism:** A desire to live and be accepted as a member of the opposite gender often accompanied by a sense of discomfort with, or inappropriateness of, one's anatomic sex, and a wish to make one's body as congruent as possible with one's preferred sex.

**Intersex People/Intersexed:** Individuals who have indeterminate sexual characteristics at birth, and who may have been assigned to the gender of the most dominant genitalia at or soon after birth. The majority of intersex people do not identify as Trans. Others may identify as Trans and choose in adulthood to undergo gender reassignment treatments to enable them to live their affirmed gender, which is opposite to that in which they were raised.

**Pre-op/Post-op:** Pre-operative and post-operative; having had or not had gender confirmation surgeries. 'Pre-operative' implies that the person desires gender reassignment surgery; if this is not the case; 'non-op' is the correct term.

**Transition:** The process of transition may include some or all of the following: cultural, legal and medical adjustments; telling one's family, friends and/or co-workers; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) some form of surgical alteration.

**Trans man – FtM:** Someone who has transitioned or is transitioning from female to male.

**Trans woman – MtF:** Someone who has transitioned or is transitioning from male to female.

**Trans/Transgender:** The terms trans/transgender are used in an inclusive, umbrella sense to describe the diversity of gender identity and gender expression. The terms can be used to describe all people who don't identify to the common notion of gender, including transsexuals.

**Transgendered:** Social and legal description of individuals living full or virtually full time on the opposite gender role to which they were assigned at birth, but do not wish to undergo gender reassignment surgery.

**Transphobia:** A fear and strong dislike of Transgender people, which can lead to hatred resulting in verbal or physical attacks and abuse.

**Transsexual:** A transsexual person is someone who identifies as a member of the sex opposite to his or her assigned sex at birth.

**Transvestite:** A person who dresses and acts intermittently in a style or manner traditionally associated with the gender opposite their sex assigned one.

**Sexual Orientation:** Describes and individuals enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attraction to another person. Trans people may be heterosexual, lesbian, gay, or bisexual.  
**Stealth/Passing:** Living in a way where nobody knows your previous gender history.

A Trans person is not visible as a Trans person. Those who do not 'pass' have some residual features of their birth sex – which often means that other people regard them still as the gender they were assigned at birth rather than their affirmed gender.

## **21. Position statement & guidance on; Values, Belief & Faith**

### **Purpose**

This position statement gives practical advice and consideration to issues which may affect staff and students relating to their individual and communal spiritual, religious and faith needs, and the broader understanding of Values, Belief and Faith in Northumberland College.

It seeks to present a coherent approach rather than definitive statements, which cover every possible situation.

Northumberland College is committed to ensuring every member of staff and student feels welcome, valued and respected.

This statement aims to support Northumberland College's core values:

"An open and welcoming College where equality and diversity is celebrated and promoted and discrimination challenged. Where staff and student communities reflect the demographic of the local population and where students are prepared for work in diverse labour markets".

### **Aims**

- ✓ To present an overarching set of principles and values which inform the College's approach to matters of Values, Belief and Faith.
- ✓ To promote an inclusive community where individuals are integrated within the institution, where diversity is recognised and equality is championed.

### **College position on Values, Belief and Faith**

The College expects all individuals to respect the religious beliefs of others. The core values of self-awareness, open-mindedness and respect will be fostered in all matters relating to Values, Belief and Faith (henceforward VBF).

The College acknowledges the potential centrality of VBF in the lives of staff and students.

The College wishes to encourage the promotion of integration, understanding and mutual respect within College life of different faith communities and cultures, as well as those who have no religious affiliation: an all faiths and none approach.

The College acknowledges that VBF is not only a religious concept, but one that relates to the educational, social and pastoral needs of the whole person. We recognise that one can be 'spiritual' or have spiritual needs without being 'religious' or a practising member of a faith community.

The College will seek to make suitable, reasonable and adequate provision for staff and students' VBF requirements for all faiths and none.

The College is committed to providing clear guidance and advice on the major religious activities that affect College life. In some cases specific guidance will be drafted to support these observances and the management of learning.

This statement acknowledges the Equality Act (2010) and the Public Sector Equality Duties (2011), which are supported by VBF provision.

The College will continue to ensure its self-assessment and quality assurance processes will include reference to the importance of VBF and SMSC.

The College will seek to develop a staff development programme that equips staff to operate in confidence with regard to VBF and SMSC.

Students and staff are encouraged to identify ways in which the College can live out its intention of meeting these requirements, which is mindful of the needs of the staff and students, the local community, and the larger global community we serve.

### **Northumberland College & Faith**

1. Northumberland College is committed to the individual: meeting individual needs, and being accessible and inclusive. VBF are important aspects of life in the UK for many individuals. Therefore, VBF are welcome at Northumberland College.
2. Northumberland College is an educational institution, and as such it does not endorse any one particular faith or belief system. It is a secular institution. Secularism is not understood to convey a sense of neutrality or that there is no place for faith. Secularism is not a state of 'banning religions', but a promotion of the freedom to practise one's own faith. It is a mistake to think secularism implies an absence of faith.
3. The College does not expect staff or students to leave their faith at the door, but would encourage everyone to feel comfortable to practise their faith: to be themselves.
4. This freedom also extends to those staff and students who do not have a faith or belief system. The college does not regard this position as somehow deficient, or that people who profess no formal faith to be second-class in any way. It is not the intention of the college to marginalise any group.
5. The College recognises that students and staff have personally held beliefs that have requirements regarding religious observances; some faith groups being placed under certain obligations and duties.
6. In practice, many who regard themselves as religious live out their faith day to day without seeking to draw attention to themselves.
7. For most of the major religions there are, in addition to personal requirements, a number of religious festivals/observances that have public dimensions.
8. Evidence shows that individuals and institutions benefit where support for observances is offered through provisions, facilities and resources. Typically there are increased levels of satisfaction, and improved retention.
9. Any endeavours to support religious observance do not imply an acceptance of one belief system over another.
10. As an educational institution the overriding concern of the college is the progress and achievement of students. To this end, allowances made for religious observance should not negatively impair student progress.

### **Spiritual Needs**

What are Spiritual Needs?

- ✓ The inner search for meaning, belief and values, and how we express them.
- ✓ At times of change, crisis or illness the questioning and struggle to find answers.
- ✓ The need to explore the otherness of life – the desire for awe and wonder.
- ✓ The sense of fulfilment found in a sense of togetherness with a group of others.
- ✓ The following are some of the human problems that indicate types of spiritual needs:
- ✓ Issues of:
  - Guilt
  - Bereavement or Loss
  - Injustice
  - Life changes
  - Emotional Hurt
  - Relationship problems
  - Prejudice
  - Discrimination
  - Loneliness
  - Faith/religion
  - Forgiveness
  - Right and wrong
  - Hopelessness
  - Self-worth

Spiritual needs are a legitimate human requirement, which Northumberland College will seek to support.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development**

The world is made up of individuals, communities and traditions built on cultural symbols, stories, ethics, beliefs and various worldviews including, but not limited to, the secular worldview.

“Learners need to be able to make sense of their lives and to make connections between their values, their education and training, their work, their communities and their leisure.” Whole People Matter, 2003, p.2

The critical dialogue between our context, learning and self-understanding lies at the heart of SMSC provision. The College is concerned to develop the whole person within the community, which lies at the centre of many faith and philosophical traditions. Allowing space for the inner reflections of spirituality and the exploration of the philosophical and religious questions of life is thus an essential element of education.

### **Meeting Needs**

A range of services and provisions are available to students and staff to support the meeting of religious and faith needs, and spiritual needs:

- ✓ Reference to SMSC issues in curricula
- ✓ Multi-faith Spaces
- ✓ Authorised absence for religious observance
- ✓ Equality & Diversity management, including the Operational E&D Committee
- ✓ Specific Faith-related policies
- ✓ Events and campaigns

Information about particular faith practices; observances, festivals, etc. will be presented to reflect an emerging or predicted need, for example ‘guidance for staff for Jummah prayer’. These documents represent specific guidance and information relating to individual VBF issues and their expression in College.



These documents may be updated from time to time, with additional guidance being appended as they are created.

The E&D Committee will review this guidance and supporting / related documents annually.